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# Ex-Army aide seized by FBI on charge of passing secrets

By James Morrison  
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A former U.S. Army intelligence employee was arrested by FBI agents yesterday on charges of passing secret national security information about U.S. double agents to a suspected Soviet spy.

Richard Craig Smith, 40, was arrested at Dulles International Airport after flying in yesterday from his Bellevue, Wash., home to surrender, a Justice Department official said.

Mr. Smith has admitted passing top-secret information about a double-agent operation, known as Royal Miter, to a Russian official at the Soviet Commercial Compound in Tokyo, an FBI agent said in a statement accompanying a criminal complaint filed against Mr. Smith by the Justice Department.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Joseph Aronica said he expects to bring more charges against Mr. Smith but did not say what those charges would be. Conviction on the espionage charges could carry a maximum sentence of life in prison, Mr. Aronica said.

"The offense is probably the most serious offense a person can commit against the United States," Mr. Aronica said. "The case against him is strong based on admissions and confessions of the defendant."

FBI agent Michael J. Waguespack, who had investigated the case since December, said Mr. Smith, during several interviews, admitted passing secret information to the Soviets.

Mr. Smith worked for the Army Intelligence and Security Command from 1973 to 1980, when he resigned to start his own business. He "borrowed extensively to finance business ventures, experienced serious financial difficulties and was forced to declare bankruptcy" in 1982, Mr. Waguespack said.

Mr. Smith, in the FBI interviews, said he was paid \$11,000 for the information he passed on to Victor I. Okunev, a suspected Russian KGB agent, on two occasions in November 1982 and in February 1983.

The information disclosed the existence of the Royal Miter operation through which the Army was able to identify KGB agents en-

gaged in spying against the United States and to determine KGB intelligence priorities and methods of operation, Mr. Waguespack said.

Mr. Smith was advised of his rights at a hearing at the U.S. Magistrate's Court in Alexandria yesterday where Magistrate W. Harris Grimsley agreed to appoint an attorney to represent him and ordered him held without bail until an April 13 preliminary hearing.

Mr. Aronica, who asked that Mr. Smith be denied bond, said he feared the defendant might try to flee the country.

Mr. Smith said it is "absurd" to think he would run away, because he has had several opportunities to flee. He said he had known he was under surveillance by the FBI for several weeks and even cooperated with the agents.

"I've had plenty of opportunities to flee," he told Mr. Grimsley. "I have nothing to gain by leaving the country. My family is here. If I was going to flee, I assure you I would have done so by now."

Mr. Smith has four children, ages 2 to 10, living with his wife in Washington state.